THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) In view of the above, does not arise.

(e) Owing to illegal immigration from Bangladesh, it is difficult to estimate the exact number of Bangladesh nationals in India. Estimates range from 8 to 10 million persons at present.

Relationship between India and Afghanistan

177. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the affect on the relationship between India and Afghanistan with the coming up of new regime in Afghanistan; and

(b) what initiatives have been taken by Government so far for establishing relationship with Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Our endeavour is to ensure that there is no basic long term negative impact on Indo-Afghan relations. Our traditionally close and friendly relations with neighbouring Afghanistan transcend governmental changes that might take place in either country.

(b) On 30 April, 1992 Government officially acknowledged the newly formed interim Government of Afghanistan. We have since then been in touch with the Afghan Government at the highest levels and have conveyed to the Afghan leadership our abiding interest in sustaining and nurturing friendship and cooperation with Afghanistan. We have also expressed our readiness to assist the Afghan Government in programmes for the betterment of the people of that country.

On 15 May, 1992, Government announced its decision to send humanitarian relief and medical supplies worth Rs. 160 lakhs to Kabul, These are in the process of being airlifted. We are also expediting supplies of approximately 44,000 tonnes of wheat on a grant basis to the Government of Afghanistan.

Government are prepared to consider further assistance, to resume our economic cooperation programme and to continue regular bilateral consultations and exchanges in all areas of mutual interest.

These decisions have been appreciated by the Afghan authorities.

Exclusive industrial estates for Japanese industries

178. SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it s a fact that Japan has submitted a proposal to start exclusive industrial estates for Japanese industries in India;

(b) what are the details of the proposal submitted by Japan to set up exclusive industrial estates;

(c) what is the reaction of Government on these proposals; and

(d) whether any discussion has taken place during the visit of the Prime Minister to Japan on the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) to (d) No such proposal has been received. However, a feasibility study for setting up separate industrial townships (industrial Model Towns) having multifunctional office building and a number of supporting activities like hospital, shopping centre etc. with Japanese assistance to promote investment and technology inflow from Japan is contemplated. This was discussed during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan.